

BOYS' and GIRLS' PAGE

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AS THE CLOCK TURNED.

Christmas eve was coming so long, and so long, to little Dickie that he began to feel it was not right to have a Christmas eve if it would not come quickly once in a while.

Each day and in fact each night he looked over the calendar and it was his particular task to mark off the days that passed. His father had brought him home a big, large figure type of calendar in order that he could check up the opening and closing of each day. This calendar had been brought home nearly a year before. Just after New Year's Day when Dickie's toys had become a little broken here and there.

"Papa," he had said very seriously, "is this really the first day of a new—a brand new New Year?"

"It certainly is, Dickie," said his father. And then papa looked very curiously at his little son, wondering what the next thing would be. Because you see Dickie had a way of asking the oddest sort of questions and sometimes even papa and mamma did not quite comprehend what it was he really wanted to know.

"Well, I was thinking, papa, just this way. If there has been a brand new year every January first then I must be brand new on every January first."

"You are always brand new, Dickie, my dear little son. You are always brand new to mamma and me, but you see as the January's come around it makes quite a difference. Along comes one January and then another January and then another January until you really have to count them up—you see, Dickie?"

"But, papa, what I don't see altogether is why we have to wait so long for Christmas in between these new years. You know your toys get broken and Santa Claus is so busy with a whole lot of things that you have to notice that it is so long before he comes again. Why can't you fix it up so it won't be so long?"

"Why, Dickie, it is all because of the clock," answered papa gravely. "If we could stop the clock we could fix it up all right. You see, Dickie, the clock will keep going on and on and on all the time and it doesn't go any faster or any slower. It must go so many minutes and so many hours and so many days and so many months. Oh, if we could stop the clock or if—yes, Dickie, if we really could make the clock go faster, why then you would have Christmas almost as often as you wished it. If we could only stop the clock or make it go faster."

"But can't we really do it?" asked

in my life. I really couldn't believe it. Why, Dickie took what his papa said so seriously that he determined the big clock that stood in the hall should go faster and so bring Santa Claus sooner! Just fancy that!

Through the hall to the clock he went—oh, so very softly, so very softly. There the big timepiece stood ticking away the minutes and the hours before he reached Santa Claus would come. As Dickie looked into its face he was sure it had a kindly, smiling face such as his father had when he told him about the clock.

The clock was so tall that he had to get a chair in the hall in order to reach up and open the door that closed on the quizzical face. After quite a stretch for a little boy only as old as he he succeeded in pulling open the door and he found himself face to face with the face of the clock.

"Oh, Mr. Clock," said Dickie earnestly, "I wish you would not be mad if I set you on. I know how to set you on, because I saw papa do it many a time. But I don't want to set you on if it isn't right to do so. You see, I do so want Christmas to come and come in a great, big hurry. So will you take it all right?"

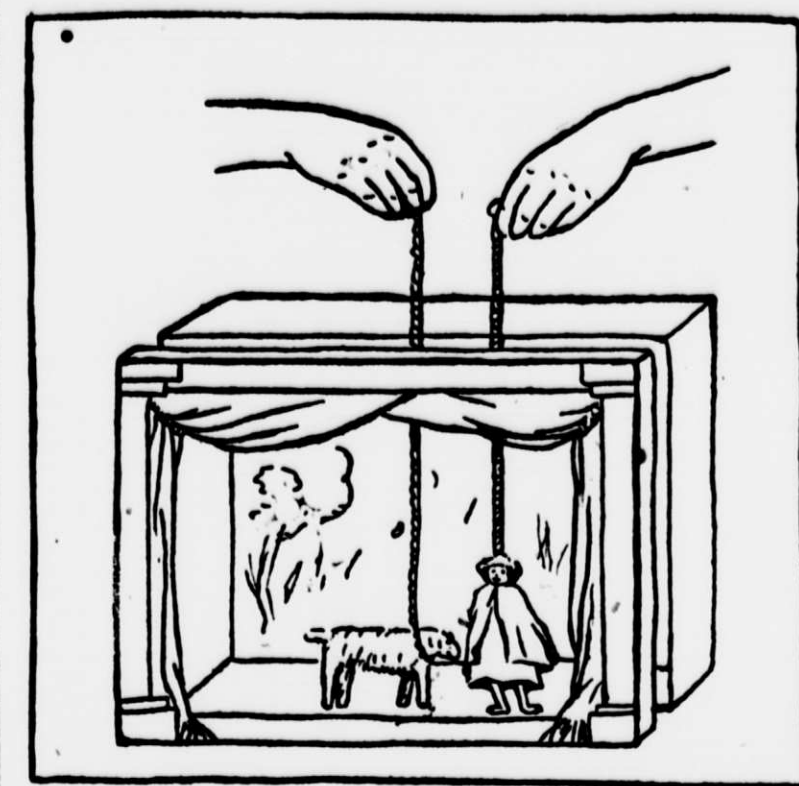
The big, tall clock ticked three times a little quicker than ordinary as though to say, "Yes." At least that is what Dickie thought and so he reached up his hand and turned the hands.

Now you must understand that Dickie was really not old enough to tell time. No; he could not understand all of the numbers on the clock face. He had to ask what time it was all during the day—and he had mamma tell him very often. He can assure you. But he did know that papa had often pushed the hands around when the big clock did not exactly agree with papa's watch.

So he turned the hands around and around and around. It just happened that he turned them in the right direction to suit his purpose, because, don't you see, that not knowing how to tell time he might have turned the clock backward and so put Christmas Eve further apart than ever from him. Just think of that!

As soon as the old clock's hands had been turned around Dickie climbed down from his chair and slipped up stairs. Now you know that in the nine old poem by the man who wrote "The Night Before Christmas," papa and mamma were the ones to see Santa Claus come down the chimney to fill the children's stockings. And so it was right at this very time. Papa and mamma had heard Dickie pull the chair

HERE'S A KRIS KRINGLE PUPPET SHOW THAT CAN EASILY BE MADE



Life is surely getting very complicated when even dolls must have their theatre! But so it is. They have been found to have marked dramatic ability, and even a doll should have its chance.

The great joy of the doll theatre is that you can make it yourself. A hat box, some sheets of heavy, gray drawing paper, your water color box and crayons, a few hours cutting and pasting, and there you have it.

Take the cover of the box and copy as well as you can the drawing of the proscenium arch that is given here. Then color it to suit your taste and cut out the centre space. The box itself must be set up on one side to form the stage.

You may paint a back scene directly on the inside of the bottom of the box or, since that will be rather hard, you may paint one on paper and hang it by means of pins. If you mean to have only one scene paste it on. But your more ambitious actors will wish you had at least two—an interior and an out-

door scene. In any case designs are given for both, simple enough for any boy or girl to copy, and a few little side scenes to screen the "wings."

Perhaps you prefer to abide by the Greek or Elizabethan schools and get along without realistic scenery. Then you may use the third design of simple paneling, with curtains at the sides. If you want to do all three, this one does very well for a baronial hall or the palace of the fairy prince.

The first interior represents the traditional kitchen of a humble home, the woodcutter's cottage, or the farmer's house, or it may be made to serve for the kitchen of the wicked stepmother's palatial home, for somehow the kitchen hearth is the place the fairies and hobgoblins most do haunt. It is the very essence of the home, for prince and peasant alike must have a kitchen hearth. And so too our one outdoor scene has been made a beautiful glade in the wood with just a glimpse of the river, down which will come the changeling babe or

the fairy prince or the fair Elaine on her barge floating down to Camelot.

For dolls—those that I know—usually play of fairies and of gnomes, of the brave knights and beautiful ladies that lived long, long ago.

In the top of the box you must cut three long narrow slits where you will manipulate the strong black thread on which the mannikins move.

You may make a curtain of pretty silk or soft dark colored muslin and run curved drawstrings in each half as in the picture and draw it up and to one side and put in a pin to fasten each string to. Or if you prefer you may roll it up from the bottom on a pencil roller and tie it up each time. For this method attach two double cords, so that one end will hang in front and one back of the curtain and tie them each time in a bow knot, which will be easy to untie quickly when you wish the curtain to descend.

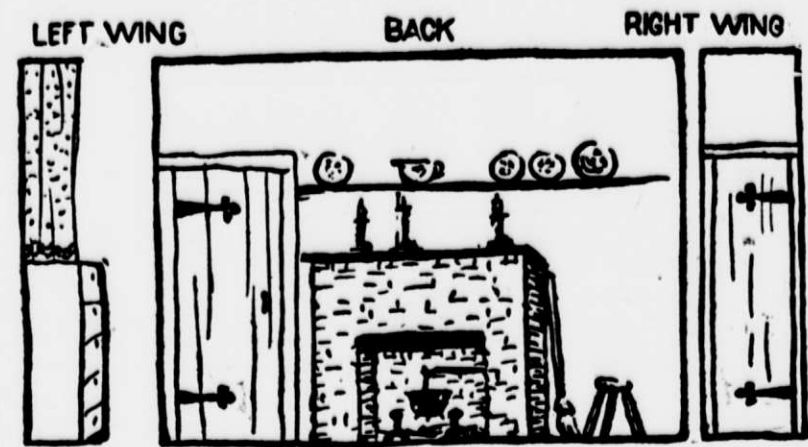
When the theatre is ready you must arrange your actors and provide their costumes. Buy as many of the little china dolls as you wish to have characters. They come in different sizes from one to three inches high, so that you can have children and grownups, and even a giant or two if you need them.

It will be great fun making the costumes of bits of silk and cloth, and you will soon have Little Red Riding Hood, Jack the Giant Killer, Cinderella, Snow White, Goldilocks and all your old favorites. You will find that you need some furniture too, and if you are not fortunate enough to own some doll furniture of proper size, you can easily make it of stiff cardboard and color it to represent wood or gold. If you need wolves or bears or other animals, the toy store will provide them, mostly on the penny counters.

When you have the actors all costumed for one play tie the strong black threads around their necks and fasten the ends to pins on the top of the box. Set your larger dolls up in a row to witness the performance and you are ready for the show to begin.

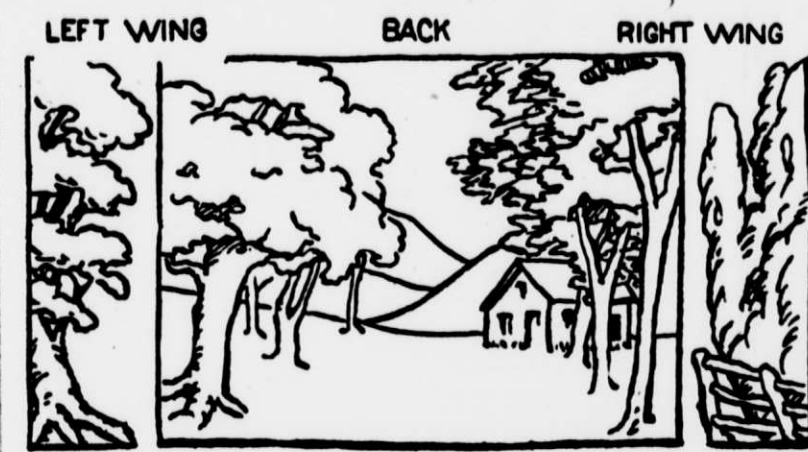
Of course you or a little friend must say the lines, changing your voice to suit each character in turn unless you want the whole play given only in pantomime.

For instance, if you choose the story of Little Red Riding Hood you will decide how many scenes you will have. There were really three: when Red Riding Hood leaves her mother and prom-



ises not to loiter in the wood; her meeting with the wolf after she has lingered picking the pretty flowers, and the scene in grandmother's cottage when the wolf is in grandmother's bed and Red Riding Hood is only saved from being eaten up by the timely entrance of the woodcutter. You might omit the first if you wished to save time, for of course you will have to lower the curtain between the acts in order to change the scenery.

If you want to have the theatre appear to go of itself get your mother to give you an old portiere or any piece of dark cloth, which you will pin across a doorway. Cut a hole in it just large enough to show the front of the theatre, which will be placed on a small table or a chair, and you can conceal your-



self entirely behind the curtain as you say the lines and move the actors about by the strings.

Here is a fairy story that may not be so well known to you as it comes from far away Japan. You must buy a set of black haired dolls for this and costume them in tiny flower kimonos. The whole scene is laid in a garden, quite unlike any we have. So we give a picture of how it will look. You will find it very simple to paint.

If you prefer to have paper dolls to act in your theatre it is easily managed. Simply paste long and very narrow strips of paper to the paper dolls; color them black so that they will not show, and with these move the dolls back and forth as you do the china dolls by the strings.

his nose. That made him very angry, for no one had ever taught him that fire burns.

Trouble was always in trouble. But often he was whipped when he did not deserve it. The little girl who lived next door had some soft brown rabbits and when mamma found a lot of rabbit fur in the yard she whipped Trouble severely. But when she went to tell the little girl about it they counted the rabbits and none of them was missing. That evening a neighbor stopped at the house and when mamma told him what had happened he laughed.

"Why, I gave some rabbit to Trouble when I was cleaning the ones I shot yesterday."

How would you like to be whipped for receiving a nice present of some rabbit fur?

Do you like to ride in an automobile? Trouble did. When Papa bought a machine he kept it down at the garage in the town and Trouble soon found the place. He waited a long time for Papa to take him, but the man told him that it must be washed first, so Trouble jumped into another machine. He spent the day riding in the cars to the houses where they were to be delivered and walking back to the garage with the man.

He was so afraid that he would miss a ride that he would lie under the machine and let the oil drip on his nice white coat. When he was driving he liked especially to sit on the front seat and put one paw on the steering wheel to help Agnes guide the car. Then he would bark at all the poor little dogs who had no homes and just walked on the streets. Once when the machine was going very fast around a corner he

leaned out too far to bark and he fell out. All the little dogs stood around and laughed at him because he had been so proud. He blinked his eyes very hard for a minute, he was so dazed and surprised and then he tore after the machine. Oh, how he could run. When Agnes saw him and stopped he jumped in so quickly and licked her face. He was so glad to see her.

Mamma did not like to have him go with her because he barked so much, so he used to hide in the shrubbery, so that no one could see him until the car had started. One time he hid under the rugs in the back of the car and when they were away out in the country he poked his head out so saucily that mamma petted him and said he should ride in the car whenever he liked.

But there came a day when Trouble stopped to play with another dog and tell him what a glorious time he had chasing after the automobiles and barking at the other dogs who could only run after grocery wagons and boys on bicycles. When he finished Agnes was out of sight. He followed the scent for many miles and could not find the way home. So if some day a white dog runs after your machine you must stop and let him in the car, for it might be Trouble.

Driest and Wettest Regions of U. S.

From the Christian Herald.

Where the driest and where the wettest sections in the United States? The driest region is what was formerly known as the "Great American Desert," now comprising the southwest of Nevada and northwest of Arizona; the wettest areas are in the North Carolina mountain region and in Florida.



Christmas is the time for glee.
sing and dance right merrily!

E. K. Krumpholtz



Christmas is the time to send
Gifts to every loving friend!

E. K. Krumpholtz

Dickie looking sharp into his father's eyes.

"I really don't see how Dickie," answered papa. And it was because Dickie thought he saw a kind of a smile in papa's eyes—the kind that he had often seen there when papa had been the "bestest" papa in the world to him—that he began to think more than usual over the situation.

So when papa and mamma kissed him good night and he lay in his little bed to think of all those wonderful things that a six-year-old thinks he made up his mind that he would look into that clock business. He knew it would hardly do to tell papa or mamma about his intention after he had been talked to so seriously, but he remembered papa's smile and he determined that there was something about the clock matter that was kind, and not so exact.

When Dickie concluded that papa and mamma were sleeping so that Santa Claus would not catch them awake—which you know is a very very dreadful thing to have occur—he rose from bed and tiptoed to the door of his room. This he opened very quietly and listened to hear if papa or mamma might unexpectedly be awake. It was early in the evening, but on Christmas eve time is not the same as on other evenings of the year.

Dickie didn't wait to put on any more wraps or clothes. It was a little chilly in the hall, but not so chilly on Christmas Eve as other nights are when you expect that many things are to happen to make you happy. Down stairs he stole, holding tightly to the banister so as not to make a single sound that might wake papa and mamma.

And what of you suppose he intended to do? Well, when I first heard this story I never was more surprised

toward the clock and they had peeked through the door of the dining room at him while he turned the hands of the clock around.

Dickie went sound asleep as soon as he reached his room upstairs, feeling very well satisfied that he had hurried Christmas along so that he would soon see his Christmas toys.

When he awoke he hurried into his knickerbockers and little rompers that mamma had bought for him and rushed downstairs to see what Santa Claus had brought him. It was 8 o'clock and papa and mamma were eating breakfast.

Dickie rushed into the library, where the Christmas tree had been placed. There was no tree. He knew it had come the day before and he knew where it was to be placed. Papa and mamma had told him that much.

Then he went to the fireplace. There hung the stockings he had placed—two pairs—but they were strangely thin. He looked all about the room. Not a sign of a toy anywhere. He began to feel a little moisture in his eyes.

He turned to the breakfast room, where papa and mamma sat.

"Good morning, little son," said papa cheerily. "Merry Christmas is now past, so we'll look for a happy New Year."

"Merry Christmas all past—isn't this Christmas morning?"

"Why, don't you remember Christmas eve, Dickie. We all thought this would be Christmas Day, but the old clock decides all of those things and, behold, when we arose this morning we seemed to have passed through Christmas Day altogether. It certainly was a strange Christmas, Dickie, to find that the old clock fooled us and had the old holiday slip away from us altogether."

"But—don't you have Santa Claus come this year?"

"If it hadn't been for that obstinate

A TINY CHRISTMAS PLAY FOR TINY ACTORS.

Two years ago some children wanted to think of a new way of celebrating Christmas and they decided to collect all the presents they could and take them to a hospital, where many poor children were suffering from diseases or from injuries. Some had been there a long time, some were almost well, some, alas! would never be any better.

But how happy they were that day and how wonderful it seemed, for the visiting children had brought with them a little play, which was so bright that it took them only a few minutes to learn it and a few more to rehearse it. Here it is, and perhaps you can use it in some hospital or home, changing the name St. Agnes to suit the place or using the second sentence given.

The costumes will be easy to get together. Santa Claus needs no description. Any old blue coat and a stiff visored cap will make a good postman. Santa's workers need only little white caps and aprons to make them look all alike in their ordinary little girls' dresses, and the fairy, why any one knows how a fairy should be dressed! Only remember she is a Christmas fairy and let her have a holly wreath in her hair, and perhaps a red cape, because she must have flown from far to the cold Santa Claus land.

THE CHRISTMAS MAIL.

Santa Claus and the little workers are asleep beside the Christmas tree. The postman's whistle is heard outside. Enter north pole postman, dressed in blue, decorated with spangles, representing snow and icicles.

Santa Claus—Oh, there is the postman. I must wake up. My reindeer will soon be here and it will be time to start. I wonder if there are any more letters for the children?

Postman—Good morning, Santa Claus, here are a few belated requests. (Santa Claus takes the letters and opens them one by one.)

Santa Claus—Yes, here is a little girl who wants a baby doll. She says it must have long tresses. Yes, yes; I think I have one like that. And here is a little boy who wants a cart. And another boy wants a camel. Oh, yes; another doll—a Dutch doll this time. This little girl must live in Holland. And this one would have a box of letter paper. And here is one that will be satisfied with nothing else than a music box. Well, well, I must see what I can do. It is very late, but I think I can supply them all.

(Enter the Christmas fairy.)

Santa Claus—Well! Well!

What have we here? Well!

Christmas Fairy—Good morning, Santa Claus, merry Christmas to you.

Santa Claus—A d who may you be?

Christmas Fairy—I am the Christmas Fairy. And I have come to bring a letter that missed the last post. It is

THE FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS.

Mid the clank of wooden shoes and whirring of busy windmills the children of Holland await the coming of the patron holiday saint, Nicholas, and the merriment of the birthday with the same eagerness that is expressed by other children in different lands. Holland, the supposed birthplace of the good bishop, celebrates the event on December 6, and the celebration in many of its principal features is like the Christmas day of our present time.

He has always been pictured as a patriarchal Episcopal bishop, dressed in full church regalia. He carries a sharp stick in one hand to chastise small offenders for rebellion against "home rule" and a coarse bag he carries under his arm in which to carry away disobedient children who cling to their bad traits of temper and yield not to the persuasion of the "limber slipper."

He is always accompanied by his black servant, who carries the bags of toys on his back for the good children.

The bishop's latter day representatives follow the tradition of costuming and customs to the letter, and it is always a marvel to the children his mysterious way of communication with their parents as to the wishes of their hearts and letting them know the exact time in which to expect him and prepare for his reception.

The rule for the reception of St. Nicholas, we are told, is "to have the house swept and garnished" with flowers appropriate to the season, and a huge sheet must be spread in the centre of the room, while a large bag of candy is suspended from the ceiling.

The children, dressed in their best gowns, caps and wooden shoes, sit around the edge of the sheet playing games, singing songs and every little while repeating this old rhyme:

St. Nicholas, good holy man,
Put on your best gown.
Ride with me to Amsterdam,
From Amsterdam to Spain.
Which in the Dutch has a much

better jingle than it has when translated. After a while a most wonderful thing happens; the bag of candy suddenly bursts and in the wild scramble each child struggles to annex as much as possible; during the excitement St. Nicholas suddenly makes his appearance. With stick upraised he solemnly catches each child, and none can imagine how he found out their little pet sins and faults and the little white marks that they thought only God and mother knew about.

But never mind, this inquisition had to come before the joys that follow could be enjoyed and they glibly promised that another year he should find them faultless if he inclined to forgive them this once. He would open the black bag by way of warning, then rap on the floor three times, when his black man would appear with the bundles of toys and the fun commenced.

One of St. Nicholas's merry jokes was to wrap a gift in successive papers addressed to three or four of the children, so that it made much complicated merriment before it reached the right owner.

At refreshment time there are wonderful cakes, shaped like little bishops, hearts, birds and animals and "letter banks," which is made of almond paste in little initials. The children spell words with them, then eat the words.

In the evening, when the little folks are tucked away in down quilts, the older people take their turn at the festivities, a bowl of steaming hot punch is brought in and plates piled with "letter banks" and other cakes too numerous to mention. After the punch has been freely circulated a large bowl of smoking hot chestnuts is brought in with salt and butter to eat with them. They are a regular part of the night's traditional entertainment. Many well known games are indulged in, and thus ends the merriment in Holland of the feast of St. Nicholas.

THE TROUBLES OF TROUBLE.

When Agnes asked for a dog for her Christmas present every one said, "He'll be such a trouble."

So that was the reason she called the little fox terrier "Trouble."

He was just a puppy when he came to the house and could eat only milk, oatmeal and such things, just like a little boy. But he was a very lively doggie. When the front door was left open he would tear into the house and run twice around the dining room table so quickly that he looked like a ball of white fur.

It took a long time for him to learn that he must not tear the newspaper into tiny bits and not eat the nice white spoils of thread. But he tried to do just as the children did, and one day mamma found him lying in the bed in the guest room with his head on the pillow and his body under the covers.

Trouble loved to play with his ball. After dinner papa would take it off the mantel and roll it across the room for him. But his favorite game was hide and seek. He hid his eyes in Agnes's lap while papa hid the ball in some low corner. Then Trouble would sniff in the wastepaper basket, put his feet on the shiny mahogany table or stick his nose under the cushions on the couch. He would be so delighted when he found the ball and hold it tightly in his sharp teeth until Agnes could take it away from him! All the children wanted to play with the ball too, but that made Trouble very jealous.

What do you think? Trouble had a Christmas tree, only it was a very small one with tiny candles on it. Agnes hung bits of chicken and candy and a nice rubber ball on it, because these were the things that Trouble loved. Puppy was so excited that he tried to eat them right off the tree and burned